SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: All right, Sir. We agree.

SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: All right, we agree.

श्री सुरेन्द्रजीत सिंह अहलुवालिया : सभापति महोदय, पहले आप मेरी बात सुन लें (व्यवधान) मैं खुद गया हूं, यह नहीं गये हैं (व्यवधान) मैं उन लोगों से मिला हूं (व्यवधान)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have called the Prime Minister to speak and he is on his legs.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra): When there is a procedure, you must go according to the procedure. You cannot say that this will do or that will do where there is a procedure. If you are suspending the Question Hour, I have no objection. But if the Prime Minister is going to reply, it must be in the form of a statement so that we can ask questions for clarification.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I put the question:

"That it is the wish of the House that Question Hour be suspended."

The motion was negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now let us go ahead with the Question Hour. Question No. 1. (*Interruptions*). I felt that the whole House wanted to know about it, that it was the feeling of the total House, and therefore, I thought that this formality was not needed. But finding that there was objection from this side, there was obejction from that side, I put the question. And then you all said 'No.' So I abide by it and the matter ends and we proceed with the Question Hour.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER): May I make one submission? If the Prime Minister were to make a statement...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. He was not permitted. And I am not permitting you or anybody else to speak on that now. I have called Question No. 1. I cannot have two standards. If I am not permitting the Prime Minister, I am not permitting the Leader of the Opposition also. The question was put and I stick to the rules.

PROF. CHANDRESH P. THAKUR (Bihar): On a point of order...

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, please sit down.

PROF. CHANDRESH P. THAKUR: I want to make one submission.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No submissions. Question No. 1.

(*Interruptions*)

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Operation of Airbus A-320 aircraft

*1. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:†
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATON be pleased to state:

(a) whether any decision has since been taken to put back into service the fleet of Airbus A-320 aircraft which were grounded after the Bangalore air crash;

(b) if not, by when a decision is likely to be taken in the matter; and

(c) in what manner Government propose to increase the carrying capacity of

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Suresh Kalmadi.

Indian Airlines to meet the havy traffic on all the routes?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGc WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN): (a) to (c) The matter is under consideration of the Government.

SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 1... (*Interruptions*)... Nothing on other than the Question will go on record.

डा० रत्नाकर पाण्डेय : *

श्री सभापति : कोई चीज नहीं। क्वेश्चन आवर है, लोगों ने क्वेश्चन आवर को सस्पेंड करने से इन्कार किया है तो क्वेश्चन आवर है, और कोई चीज जो बोलेंगे वह रिकार्ड पर नहीं जायेगी।

SHRI MAKHAN LAL FOTEDAR:* (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Kalmadi.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, it is very surprising: the one-line reply by the Government on the national debate on the aircrash of A-320. It shows the dilemma in which the Government is in. Though the Airbus A-320 is grounded, the files regarding A-320 are plying between the Civil Aviation Ministry, the Indian Airlines and the Prime Minister's Office. It is now found out that the decision to ground the Airbus A-320 was not taken by the Indian Airlines which is an autonomous body but by the Civil Aviation Ministry, and it was ratified by the Cabinet. Sir, after that the Government has been pressurising the Indian Airlines to ratify the decision of the Civil Aviation Ministry but the Indian Airlines has refused to do so. And the Government says that the matter is under consideration. Sir, the Civil Aviation Ministry sources three days back leaked out to the entire Press that the Airbus will fly again within a week in a phased manner. Just the day before yesterday, Sir, the Prime Minister ... (*Interruptions*) He stated the Airbus A-320 would not fly till the Court of Inquiry finding is completed by the 31st May. The Minister tells us that the matter is under consideration. The Prime Minister says something, you said something in Madras yesterday and today. The Parliament has a right to know what is happening about it. The grounding has cost us Rs. 100 crores and... (*Interruptions*) The question is very clear. I am coming to that.

I want to know what you are going to do about it. You have wasted Rs. 100 crores. Take a decision: let the aircraft fly or let the aircraft be grounded, but you cannot keep the matter under consideration like this. The Prime Minister made a statement the day before yesterday that Airbus A-320 cannot be grounded till the Court of Inquiry report is made. I would like to ask you whether you are going to ask the Court of Inquiry for an interim report to enable you to decide whether the aircraft may fly or it may be grounded.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, I think this is not a Question Hour but an allegation hour—allegations without any basis whatsoever. (*Interruptions*) I am coming to the answer.

*Not recorded.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, I seek your protection. What type of an answer is like this? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am answering. The problem is that he does not like me to complete. I will not get away...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: It is the right of a Member to ask a question. It is not an allegation.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Let me complete at least. Do you want me to reply or do you want me to sit down?

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH: The allegation has been made by your own party, not by us... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Thank you very much for revealing the secret! (*Interruptions*)

Sir, Shri Kalmadi is talking of the dilemma. It is true, Sir, that this is a serious question. We have landed in this situation because of Mr. Kalmadi and his friends. And I believe he will appreciate who is responsible for us to land in this situation where we are facing this dilemma. (*Interruptions*) Please let me complete. (*Interruptions*) You have asked a question. You can ask the second supplementary. Let me complete. Since you have raised so many questions, I will go into all those things. You have mentioned about the dilemma. I will say that yes there is a dliemma. (*Interruptions*) You have not asked the question. I am not going to reply if he disturbs me like this. Why is he disturbing? He can put a supplementary. Yes, it is true that we are faced with this dilemma. It is true because the Government of India's hard-earned money is involved. A decision had been taken to invest Rs. 2500 crores. All these 14 aircraft are standing on our airports. They are not being used. This is a serious situation. This is a dilemma with which we are faced. On the one hand, we have invested Rs. 2500 crores. On the other hand, the question of the safety of the travelling public is uppermost in our mind and we cannot compromise on the question of the safety of the travelling public. So, this is a serious question.

Sir, I do not know the source of Shri Kalmadi when he says that the files are travelling between Civil Aviation Ministry, Prime Minister's Office and the Indian Airlines Board. Sir, files do go from one Ministry to another. If a Cabinet decision is to be taken, then the matter is referred by a particular Ministry to the Prime Minister's office. But I do not know what he means by saying that they are travelling between Prime Minister's Office and the Civil Aviation Ministry. The matter has been referred by the Civil Aviation Ministry to the Cabinet Secretariat for consideraion by the Cabinet and for taking a view on the whole thing because so many questions are involved. Now he says that the Ministry is putting pressure on the Indian Airlines Board. Sir, as I said earlier, these are allegations without any basis whatsoever. The Government is not trying to shift responsibility. Government has taken a decision to ground the Airbus. We took the decision because very deep apprehensions and doubts had come into the mind of the travelling public. It is our responsibility to ensure that these doubts and apprehensions do not exist and that these doubts and apprehensions are allayed. The decision of the Indian Airlines Board is not needed. This is a decision which has been taken by the Government and we own full responsibility for taking this decision.

Shri Kalmadi claimed that the Civil Avaition Ministry leaked some reports to the press saying that this will be done in a phased manner. I do not know about this leaking business. I do not know how he has come to the conclusion that the Civil Aviation Ministry has leaked it. I do not think anybody has taken any contradictory stand. The Prime Minister has said it in Delhi the day before yesterday. It is reported that Mr. Singh stated: "The

Government was not prepared to take any chances with the safety of the passengers till the inquiry headed by Justice Bhatt established the cause of the accident." Sir, I said almost exactly the same thing in Madras on the same day.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Why are you keeping us in the dark? You give a one-line reply to us. You tell the public in Madras. The Prime Minister tells the press. But you cannot tell the Parliament.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I do not know how many times I have repeated it in Parliament. I have said in this House that unless we satisfy ourselves about the safety aspects of the plane, there is no question of taking any decision. Since these 14 aircraft are standing at the airports and 4 aircraft are ready for delivery, this is a situation which needs consideration and the matter is under consideration of the Government. A decision will be taken in due course.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, he is totally misleading the House. He has said that he has been repeating it in Parliament. Not once has the Minister said on the floor of the House that the aircraft will not fly till Justice Bhatt's report is made known. The Prime Minister has said it the day before yesterday I said it in Madras yesterday. On the contrary, when I demanded an assurance from him, he said that he is discussing with the pilots. So, please do not mislead the House in this matter.

Sir, my second supplementary is that a massive propaganda has been launched by the Airbus Industries that this is the fault of the pilots. Even the French pilots who were involved in an earlier accident have been sued by the Airbus Industries. And in India also, the Airbus is launching a big tirade against them. Sir, the Pilots Association has come out, and again a leak has come out—one leak was about the voice recorder; we wanted to know in the Parliament, and it came out in the press; again the report of the Director of Aciddents of Civil Aviation has also been reported in the press; I do not know who is organising these reports—the Pilots Association has come out very clearly about the landing phase. Sir, no doubt, this A-320 aircraft is one of the most modern technological aircraft. There is no doubt about it. I am not going into whether it is good or bad. I am just saying that there are certain snags especially in the landing phase. I want to know whether the Government has been in touch with the Airbus Industries to rectify the fault in the landing phase. There is no point that the Airbus Industries and everybody blaming the pilots. But have they also received a communication from the Airbus Industries that they are rectifying the system? Sir, it is a modern system and because of this modern system there can be a pilot error. I want to know whether that part of it is being looked into because the aircraft are now on the ground for so many months. What steps have been taken by the Minister to keep the aircraft going? Once the aircraft fly again, there will be many more snags. What steps are being taken by the Government to keep these aircraft going? I want to know whether the Government will consider carrying freight instead of passengers to instil pilots' confidence and training, and whether you will consider the suggestion to carry freight in the aircraft as a first step before taking the passengers.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: No, Sir, because if we take that decision, I think, it will further aggravate the apprehensions and fears in the minds of the travelling public. Sir, I think, I should clarify what I had stated. The hon. Member is right. I had not referred to the Court of Enquiry. But I had stated in the House that the uppermost consideration in the mind of the Government is the safety of the travelling public, and because the term of reference of the Court of Enquiry is to establish the cause of accident, they are bound to go into all the questions, whether it is pilot's error or it is because of a major design defect or whatever is the cause. It is not right or proper for me, Sir, to speculate whose error it was. Sir, he is saying that the report has been leaked. Sir, no report has been leaked. This report of the Inspector of Enquiry,

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after he has completed the enquiry, has been submitted to the Court of Enquiry because, Sir, it is a statutory requirement that as soon as something happens like the Bangalore crash, the Inspector of Enquiry is appointed immediately, and he starts working for establishing the cause of accident. But since we were of the view that this is a grave matter and the accident has taken the lives of more than 90 people, we decided to appoint a Court of Enquiry. And after the appointment of the Court of Enquiry, the Inspector of Enquiry becomes part of the Court of Enquiry automatically. So, whatever report the Inspector of Enquiry has prepared, that report is submitted to the Court of Enquiry, and it is treated like any other piece of evidence. Sir, there is no leak. In fact, the Court of Enquiry will take that report into consideration; there will be examination, there will be cross-examination, and then it will be for the Court of Enquiry. And, Sir, whether it is the Prime Minister who has made the statement or I made the statement, generally, what we have in our mind is that the time given to the Court of Enquiry is still 30th of May. It is true that the Government can take all these things into consideration. But it is for the Court of Enquiry to establish the cause of accident.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sr, he has not replied whether the flights will be resumed before the 31st May or not? Is the aircraft going to fly before the 31st of May or not? That is what I want to know. You are telling everybody outside but not in Parliament.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, it is not correct that I am telling everybody outside the Parliament. Nobody is telling, Sir. I have said that the matter is under the consideration of the Government. (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is whether you are seeing that the planes remain air worthy? Am I right?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Sir, my question is whether the aircraft will fly before the 31st of May or they will not fly till the Court of Inquiry gives the report?

AN HON. MEMBER: He wants a decision before a decision.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, I had stated earlier in the House that when the pilots came to see me they said that since a decision has been taken to ground the entire fleet before the resumption of the flights, they would like to know about the cause of the accident. I told them specifically that in that case they will have to wait till the report of the court of inquiry comes. Sir, at that stage they said that if the print out of the CVP, Cokpit Voice Recorder and DFDR, digital flight data recorder is made available to them, then they can make their own studies and they can come to certain conclusions. Sir, I had stated in the House that we saw a lot of merit in what the pilots' association was saying and we took a decision to make both these print outs available to them. They are studying it and that is why I am saying that ... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: But the Prime Minister has said that...

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: The Prime Minister has made this statement because the uppermost consideration in our mind is the safety of the travelling public. Unless we satisfy ourselves fully that it is safe to resume the flights, we are not going to take any decision. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Mr. Chairman Sir, I can appreciate the dilemma of the Hon. Minister because the entire Government is in dilemma how to run this Government.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, what is your supplementary?

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, he used the word 'dilemma'. So, I want to find out what the Minister's dilemma is. (*Interruptions*). I fell very sorry for him. If you see the question, it has three parts a, b and c. The Minister has just replied and the Hon. Minister has not bothered to see the answer and he says just under consideration. I know the entire country is under consideration for every matter in the country, what to speak of A-320, whether it is Kashmir or Punjab or whatever it is.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Because there is not one leader. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, make him a Minister. I request you, kindly make him a Minister so that he can answer my questions. The question is very simple, by when will a decision be taken? The Minister could have said exactly what he said now. But he has not bothered to reply. Similarly, question (c) asks, how are you going to increase the capacity. I wish he could have been more considerate. Anyway, since he has not replied, I would like to know the specific answer. I understand that this Airbus Industries has made a complaint to ICAO about our action on the grounding of the Airbus aircraft. What is the reaction of the Minister in this connection? Is there any pressure from them to take the delivery even if these aircraft are not considered suitable from our point of view? And the question arises that over 55 operational engineering bulletins containing the flaws were issued by the Airbus Industries of France. Manufacturers of A-320, in one year, but these were never brought to the knowledge of the pilots. Is it true?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, the last part of the question I have not been able to follow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He says the Airbus Industries had pointed out certain faults in the aircraft which had to be rectified and what is it? Would you repeat it?

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, let him heply to the first part. Otherwise he will forget it again.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly repeat the second part of the question.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: The second part is, over 55 operational engineering bulletins containing the flaws were issued by the Airbus Industries of France, the manufacturers of the A-320 aircraft, in one year. These were never brought to the notice of the pilots. Is it true?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, after suspension of operation of the A-320 aircraft, the Government appointed the Ramdas Committee to go into the question, particularly, the preparedness of the Indian Airlines to operate the aircraft safely. The Committee has submitted its interim report. The Indian Airlines has been directed to take action to augment and strengthen the training programme. We have also taken a decision to upgrade the facilities on the ground so that all these aircrafts can be handled safely.

In regard to the question of flaws, engineering flaws, which the hon. Member mentioned, some complaints of this nature have come to the notice of the Government and the Indian Airlines, particularly, the Director-General of Civil Aviation, has been given instructions. They have been directed to ensure that nothing is left to chance as far as the safe operation of the aircraft is concerned.

About capacity, to which the hon. Member referred, we have taken the help of Air India. We had also asked Vayudoot, initially, to fly on some of these routes where, because of the grounding of the A-320 aircraft, there was some problem in regard to capacity We were faced with the problem of shortage of capacity. Suspension of operation of the A-320 aircraft has led to shortage of capacity and the Indian Airlines has been compelled to reduce its operations. Because of the reduced operations, the system seat factor of the Indian Airlines' flights has gone up from

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

73.2 per cent before suspension of operation of the A-32 aircraft to 79.5 per cent after suspension.

About the pressure coming from the manufacturers, let me reiterate again that we are not going to accept any pressure from anybody and, as far as the safety of the aircraft is concerned, nothing will be left to chance and no risk will be taken.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Sir, I need your protection. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: What happened?

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: My second question he could not understand. I appreciate his difficulty. Can I request him to reply to me by letter because he has not understood my question? Or, I will repeat the question because he has not understood. This is a very serious question. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, I have already said that nothing has come officially. But some of these reports which appeared in the Press have come to the notice of the Government. We have given instructions to the Indian Airlines and the Director-General of Civil Aviation to take these into consideration and be strict. In fact, I would like to emphasise that whatever relaxations were given earlier—for example, a co-pilot without having completed hundred hours was considered for appointment as captain of the A-320 aircraft—we have given instructions to withdraw these relaxations.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: That was not my question.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: I am only giving an instance. I am not saying that you asked that question. As I said earlier, we have taken decision to strengthen and augment the training programme. We have taken decision in regard to upgradation of facilities at the airports for the safe operation of not only the A-320 aircraft but also of any kind of aircraft.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI. Sir, I would like to know ...

MR. CHAIRMAN: How are you getting up? (*Interruptions*) No. This is Question Hour. Only those whom I permit to put supplementaries can do so and nobody else. Shri Swell.

SHRI G. G. SWELL: Mr. Chirman, Sir, many reports have appeared in the press relating to this matter. We take note of them, but we cannot go by the reports in the press. The hon Minister however, is in a best position to judge. After this accident, he must have gone through the records relating to the purchase of this particular aircraft. Would he be in a position to say in the House, after going through these records that the action taken was in haste and the repentance now is at leisure? What are the over-riding reasons for doing away with the contract of a particular company that had supplied us dependable aircraft? At whose behest was this done? Was it done at the behest of somebody in unquestionable and unassailable authority in the country at that time?

SHRI SITARAM KESARI: There is no question.

SHRI G. G. SWELL: That is the question. At whose behest was it done?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, the matter was earlier discussed in the House when hon. Kulkarni had raised this question. It is true that while concluding the deal to acquire A-320 aircraft Government has noticed many procedural violations. In fact, this was an unsolicited offer. The Technical Evaluation Committee of the Indian Airlines Board had recommended another type of aircraft, but this unsolicited offer came and this unsolicited offer was evaluated by a special cell created of one man, that too, the cell was created on informal basis. The cell was not created on 'formal basis' In fact, many other allegations had appeared in the press.

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH: This is how they are playing with the safety of the public.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: We have taken notice of these reports and the allegations which have been made. The matter was referred to the investigation agencies, and CBI has already registered an FIR, but I would like to make an appeal to the hon. Members that the two questions, (1) the alleged irregularities in the deal or violations in the procedure while concluding the deal and (2) airworthiness of the aircraft, must not be linked, must not be mixed up. They should be looked at differently because after all, the country has made huge investment in the acquisition of these aircraft.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: *

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri N.K.P. Salve. (*Interruptions*). Whatever Shri Kulkarni says will not go on record. Yes, Mr. N.K.P. Salve.

SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Shri Kulkarni's name was mentioned. That is why he should be given time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, I have called Shri N. K. P. Salve. (*Interruptions*). I will look into it.

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: This question is as important as it is sensitive and I really wish to rise above our party predilections and affiliations. I hope the Minister, while replying, will come up to the objectivity with which I am asking the question.

Is India the only country which has purchased this A-320 aircraft or other countries have also purchased? Have they heard of similar problems in respect of this aircraft in other countries because this question is related to the question of maintenance? The manufacturers have been covertly or overtly blaming us for not adhering to certain standards of maintenance, high degree sophisticated maintenance. That is what the manufacturers are saying. I do not expect that the Indian Airlines would be keeping the maintenance below standards because that would be jeopardising the flight interest of the air travellers. Therefore, the first question is linked up with the maintenance part.

The second question I would like to ask the hon. Minister is, why don't you take the nation into confidence so far as Ramdas Committee Report is concerned? We are entitled to know what is your technical evaluation as to the basic manufacturing defects, if there are any or not in the matter. You can submit this by way of evidence to the Bhatt Committee, but you can certainly take the nation into confidence. This is one area in which the whole nation is very deeply interested and you are keeping away this report from us. It leads to all sorts of speculations in the matter.

Finally, the technical factor is very important. But the grounding of the aircraft seems to have paralysed the working of the Indian Airlines. The technical factor is extremely important, because if the report is given on the 30th, it will take another two months, or perhaps a month, for the Ministry to set right the maladjustment that has come about. Therefore, I would like to know from the Minister what is being done to ensure that this paralysis which has been caused and this maladjustment which has come about in the fights of the Indian Airlines are rectified within the minimum duration.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, the hon. Member, Shri N.K.P. Salve, wants to know if India is the only country which has taken a decision to acquire these aircraft, or some other countries have also got the aircraft. Sir, I do not know what the position is today, but at the time when the decision was taken by India to acquire these aircraft, we were possibly the first country to place a major order on Airbus Industrie for the acquisition of A-320 fitted with V2500 engine, because at the time when we took the decision to place the order on Airbus Industrie, V2500 engine which was to be fitted in A320 was still on the drawing board stage. In fact, some other airlines, like Lufthansa, placed the order sometime af-

*Not recorded.

[Shri Arif Mohd. Khan]

ter we had placed the order for the acquisition of the same aircraft, but subsequently cancelled their order, not of A-320 aircraft but of A-320 aircraft fitted with V2500 engine. The orders were cancelled.

Now, Sir, according to information available—because this question mainly dealt with resumption of flights and I am depending on my memory because only fast month I had replied to the same question in this House—Cyprus Airlines has two aircraft, one American ailrines has two aircraft, there is another airlines which has more than 10 aircraft, but that airlines which has more than 10 aircraft is not operating these aircraft for commercial reasons. We are only airlines which has 14 A-320 aircraft fitted with V 2500 engine who were operating these aircraft till we suspended their flights. I have emphasised it that we took the decision . . .

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: Is there any other airlines which has A-320 with the same engine?

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Yes, I have talked of the Cyprus Airlines and the other airlines which have two aircraft each fitted with the same engine and they have also experienced—I have the information with me—similar kind of snags developing in their aircraft.

As regards the other question about maintenance and facilities at the airport, I have repeatedly said that a decision was taken to invest Rs. 2500 crores to acquire these new aircraft and the strange logic given in favour of the decision to acquire these aircraft—one of the main reasons—was that if we go in for this particular type of aircraft, we will not need any additional investment to create more ground facilities, that with the existing ground facilities, there can be safe operation of these aircraft.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your answer should also be short.

SHRI KAMAL MORARKA: Sir, you allow half-an-hour discussion on this question and go to the next question.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, about the Ramdas Committee, I will very briefly mention that one of the terms of reference of the Committee was to go into the question of preparedness of the Indian Airlines, and they have made several recommendations about the strengthening and augmenting of the training programme and for creating more facilities on the ground. That has not dealt with the question of design defects, if any, in the plane.

The functioning of the Indian Airlines has not been paralyzed, but it is true that the capacity has been affected to the extent of 15 to 20 per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri A. G. Kulkarni.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: How long should we be in the air?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir, the honourable Minister has mentioned during his reply that I raised certain questions but my questions were related to the aspects of the purchase of aircraft and the link with the engine. Mr. Khan, you have extensively replied to many questions, but I really find that your Government is very wavering in all these matters. When you speak of the safety of the passengers or about the Prime Minister's concern about the safety of the passengers, nobody will object to that. But the point is, 2,500 precious crores of rupees have been spent on this, and this country is no so rich. And your Government is all along wavering, not taking a decision. Either you sell the aircraft, if there is no legal objection, or you arrange something else. Now, you have appointed 27 committees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What is your supplementary?

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: My supplementary is this: You have filed so many FIRs in the court. Your plan is just to denigrate the Opposition now sitting here by filing FIRs and creating suspicion. The point is, this is a political Gimmick being adopted by the Government. They are filing FIRs in the court and people think that we have taken some money. You have not proved even

a single item of that. So, don't play mischief, don't indulge in gimmicks. Be straightforward. This is not proper functioning of the Government. So, I want to know from you, when are you going to stop these FIRs, these committees and this wavering?

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: The grounding was a political decision, not a technical decision ... (*Interruptions*) ...

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Sir let him reply to me.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir I have great regard and respect for my senior Shri Kulkarni.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Everybody has got respect and you misbehave, go to court and file FIRs and the reputation of my party is unnecessarily damaged.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Sir, I appreciate his concern and anguish because. it is not only now when he is sitting on the Opposition Benches, but even when he was sitting on the Treasury Benches, he was again and again trying to draw the attention of the Government and emphasizing about enforcement of safety standards in the Indian Airlines; he has been doing that. It is not a question of wavering it is a serious question. As I stated earlier, it is...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Tell them that you are not wavering.

SHRI ARIF MOHD. KHAN: Rs. 2,500 crores have been spent on the one hand and, on the other, the question of safety of passengers is involved. So. we will have to go into every question in detail and then come to a decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 2.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: When is it going to be decided?

...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 2. Twenty-four minutes have gone already.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: And I don't get a chance.

Action for recovery of overcharged Amounts on combiflame

*2. SHRI BEKAL UTSAHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 1445 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 26th March, 1990 and state:

(a) when M/s. Carews Pharmaceuticals was asked to furnish details in respect of Combiflame and when his Ministry received these details;

(b) when the Drugs Controller of West Bengal was asked to take legal action against the company and what progress has so far been made in this direction;

(c) when did the violation come to the notice of his Ministry for the first time; and

(d) by when action against the company is ilkely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

(a) to (d) In August, 1988, it was brought to the notice of the Government that M|s. Carews Pharmaceuticals Ltd., a SSI unit were marketing Cambiflame tablets in cooperation with an organised company without any price approval under the Drugs (Prices Control) Order 1987. The matter was examined in detail by the Government and it was noted that the company was not eligible for any exemption, for being a SSI unit, from price control under the provisions of Drugs (Prices Control) Order 1987. As such, on 20-7-1989 the Company